

Amendments to the Claims

Please cancel Claims 1-21. Please amend Claims 22-23, 26, and 28-31. Please add new Claims 32-47. The Claim Listing below will replace all prior versions of the claims in the application:

Claim Listing

1-21. (Canceled)

22. (Currently amended) A method for forwarding received data for a logical link, the method implemented in a switch device in a multistage switch, the multistage switch comprising a matrix of switch devices connected to each other through internal output ports, the logical link comprising a plurality of physical links and coupling the multistage switch to a destination through a plurality of output ports connected to the multistage switch, the method comprising the steps of:

upon determining ~~that~~ at a switch device to forward the received data ~~is to be forwarded to a member~~ one of the physical links of the logical link, selecting a trunk table associated with the logical link from a plurality of trunk tables, each trunk table including trunk table entries, each trunk table entry including a bit for each internal output port of the forwarding switch device;

computing a forward vector, using the forwarding switch device, for the received data dependent on a selected trunk table entry for the received data, the forward vector indicating the internal output port through which to forward the received data; and

forwarding the received data to the ~~selected~~ internal output port indicated by the forward vector.

23. (Currently amended) The method as defined in Claim 22 wherein the forward vector is computed by combining a trunk table entry from the selected trunk table, a physical forward vector and an echo suppression entry selected from a plurality of echo suppression tables.

24. (Original) The method as defined in Claim 23 wherein one of the plurality of echo suppression tables is selected by a trunk selector.
25. (Original) The method as defined in Claim 23 wherein the entry from the selected trunk table is selected by a flow hash dependent on a destination address and a source address included in the received data.
26. (Currently amended) The method as defined in Claim 22 wherein ~~switch devices in a row~~ of coupled switch devices in the matrix of switch devices includes a plurality of fan-in/fan-out devices coupled to output ports of the multistage switch, an ingress device having internal input ports connected to the plurality of fan-in/fan-out devices and internal output ports connected to an egress device, ~~an~~ the egress device having internal input ports connected to the ingress device and internal output ports connected to the plurality of fan-in/fan-out devices.
27. (Original) The method as defined in Claim 22 wherein one of the plurality of trunk tables is selected by a trunk selector.
28. (Currently amended) A multistage switch to which a logical link couples a destination, the logical link comprising a plurality of physical links, the multistage switch comprising:
 - a plurality of external ports, each physical link coupled to one of the plurality of external ports; and
 - a matrix of coupled switch devices, a frame received for the destination being forwarded through at least one of the switch devices to one of the physical links in the logical link, the switch device which receives the forwarded frame forwarding the frame based on the logical link toward less than all of the physical links of the logical link to reduce the number of subsequent switch devices through which the frame is forwarded, ~~switch devices in a row~~ of a number of the coupled switch devices in said matrix including at least one fan-in/fan-out device coupled to output ports of the multistage

switch, an ingress device having internal input ports connected to said at least one fan-in/fan-out device and internal output ports connected to an egress device, ~~an~~ the egress device having internal input ports connected to said ingress device and internal output ports connected to said at least one fan-in/fan-out device.

29. (Currently amended) A multistage switch to which a logical link couples a destination, the logical link comprising a plurality of physical links, the multistage switch comprising:

a plurality of external ports, each physical link coupled to one of the plurality of external ports;

a matrix of coupled switch devices, at least two of the physical links coupled to external ports on different switch devices, ~~switch devices in a row of a number of the coupled switch devices in said matrix~~ including at least one fan-in/fan-out device coupled to output ports of the multistage switch, an ingress device having internal input ports connected to said at least one fan-in/fan-out device and internal output ports connected to an egress device, ~~an~~ the egress device having internal input ports connected to said ingress device and internal output ports connected to said at least one fan-in/fan-out device; and

means for forwarding a frame received for the destination through at least one of the coupled switch devices to one of the physical links in the logical link based on the logical link toward less than all of the physical links of the logical link to reduce the number of subsequent switch devices through which the frame is forwarded.

30. (Currently amended) A method for providing a multistage switch, to which a logical link couples a destination through a plurality of physical links comprising the steps of:

providing a plurality of external ports, each of the physical links coupled to one of the external ports;

providing a matrix of coupled switch devices, at least two of the physical links coupled to external ports on different switch devices, ~~switch devices in a row of a number of the coupled switch devices in said matrix include~~ including at least one fan-in/fan-out device coupled to output ports of the multistage switch, an ingress device having internal

input ports connected to said at least one fan-in/fan-out device and internal output ports connected to an egress device, ~~an~~ the egress device having internal input ports connected to said ingress device and internal output ports connected to said at least one fan-in/fan-out device;

forwarding a frame received for the destination to one of the physical links in the logical link through at least one of the coupled switch devices; and

in the switch device receiving the forwarded frame, forwarding the frame based on the logical link[[,]] toward less than all of the plural links of the logical link to reduce the number of subsequent switch devices through which to forward the forwarded frame.

31. (Currently amended) A method for forwarding received data for a logical link, the method implemented in a switch device in a multistage switch, the multistage switch comprising a matrix of switch devices connected to each other through internal output ports, the logical link comprising a plurality of physical links and coupling the multistage switch to a destination through a plurality of output ports connected to the multistage switch, the method comprising the steps of:

upon determining ~~that~~ at a switch device to forward the received data ~~is to be forwarded to a member~~ one of the physical links of the logical link, selecting a trunk table associated with the logical link from a plurality of trunk tables, each trunk table including trunk table entries, each trunk table entry including a bit for each internal output port of the forwarding switch device;

computing a forward vector, using the forwarding switch device, for the received data dependent on a selected trunk table entry for the received data, the forward vector indicating the internal output port through which to forward the received data; and

forwarding the received data to the ~~selected~~ internal output port indicated by the forward vector, wherein ~~switch devices in a row of coupled switch devices~~ in said matrix ~~include~~ includes at least one fan-in/fan-out device coupled to output ports of the multistage switch, an ingress device having internal input ports connected to said at least one fan-in/fan-out device and internal output ports connected to an egress device, ~~an~~ the

egress device having internal input ports connected to said ingress device and internal output ports connected to said at least one fan-in/fan-out device.

32. (New) The multistage switch as claimed in Claim 28 wherein the switch device that receives the forwarded frame further comprises:
 - a trunk table selector that selects a trunk table for the logical link to reduce the number of ports of the multistage switch through which to forward the frame.
33. (New) The multistage switch as claimed in Claim 32 wherein the trunk table for the logical link is shared by another logical link.
34. (New) The multistage switch as claimed in Claim 28 wherein the switch device that receives the forwarded frame further comprises:
 - flow hash logic which indexes a flow hash for the received frame dependent on a destination address and source address included in the received frame.
35. (New) The multistage switch as claimed in Claim 28 wherein the switch device that receives the forwarded frame further comprises:
 - an echo suppression table which includes an entry for each port, the entry selected dependent on the port receiving the frame and the entry ensuring that the frame is not forwarded to any of the physical links of the logical link on which it was received.
36. (New) The multistage switch as claimed in Claim 35 wherein the echo suppression table includes an entry for each external port at which a frame is received.
37. (New) The multistage switch as claimed in Claim 28 wherein at least two of the physical links are coupled to external ports on different switch devices.
38. (New) The multistage switch as claimed in Claim 29 further comprising:

means for selecting a trunk table for the logical link to reduce the number of ports of the multistage switch through which to forward the frame.

39. (New) The multistage switch as claimed in Claim 38 wherein the trunk table for the logical link is shared by another logical link.
40. (New) The multistage switch as claimed in Claim 29 further comprising:
 - means for indexing a flow hash for the received frame dependent on a destination address and source address included in the received frame.
41. (New) The multistage switch as claimed in Claim 29 further comprising:
 - means for storing an echo suppression vector for each internal port; and
 - means for selecting a vector dependent on the internal port receiving the frame so the frame is not forwarded to any of the physical links of the logical link on which it was received.
42. (New) The multistage switch as claimed in Claim 41 wherein the echo suppression table includes an entry for each external port at which a frame is received.
43. (New) The method as claimed in Claim 30 further comprising the step of:
 - selecting a trunk table for the logical link to reduce the number of ports of the multistage switch through which to forward the frame.
44. (New) The method as claimed in Claim 43 wherein the trunk table for the logical link is shared by another logical link.
45. (New) The method as claimed in Claim 30 further comprising the step of:
 - indexing a flow hash for the received frame dependent on a destination address and source address included in the received frame.

46. (New) The method as claimed in Claim 30 further comprising the steps of:
storing an echo suppression vector for each internal port; and
selecting a vector dependent on the internal port receiving the frame so the frame is not forwarded to any of the physical links of the logical link on which it was received.
47. (New) The method as claimed in Claim 46 wherein the echo suppression table includes an entry for each external port coupled to the switch device.